(c) whether the Company was referred to Board for Industrial and Finance Restructuring;

(d) if so, the reports of the BIFR; and

(e) the steps proposed to be undertaken to rehabilitate the surplus manpower as a result of the close down?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SMT.) RITA VERMA] : (a) to (e) Bharat Gold Mines Ltd. (BGML) was referred to Board for Industrial and Finanace Restructuring (BIFR) in 1992 when the Company became sick in terms of provisions of Sick Industrial Company (Special Provisions) Act, 1985 (SICA). As efforts to rehabilitate BGML including through the joint venture route were not successful the Government felt that revival of the Company was not feasible. The Government submitted to the BIFR that it would have no objection to winding up of the Company under the provisions of SICA, and that the Government was ready to offer to all the employees on rolls of the Company as on 31st March, 1999 the benefit of the separation scheme on the lines of the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) package approved for the Public Sector Enterprises of the Department of Heavy Industry. BIFR, having heard the case, has issued *prima facie* winding up notice in respect of BGML on 21-2-2000 and fixed hearing on 16-5-2000 for suggestions/objections. The Government has already offered the benefit of VRS to all the employees of BGML.

Change in the Structure of ECL

2842. SHRI SHIBU SOREN : Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) is on the process of undergoing major change in its structure;

(b) if so, the details and the time span fixed; and

(c) the details of the loan given by Government and the Coal India Limited to ECL ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SMT.) RITA VERMA] : (a) to (b) No final decision on structural changes in Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) has so far been taken by the Government.

(c) No loan is given directly by the Central Government to ECL. All Government loans are sanctioned to Coal India Limited (CIL). However, unsecured loan of CIL to ECL outstanding as on 31-3-1999 is Rs. 61557.30 lakhs.

Shifting of CIL HO to Ranchi

†2843. SHRI SHIBU SOREN : Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government realize the fact that since of the coal mines are located in the Jharkhand area, the Head Office of Coal India Limited be shifted from Calcutta to Ranchi for better management of these mines;

(b) if so, by when this work is likely to be completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SMT.) RITA VERMA] : (a) to (c) At present, therer is no proposal to shift the Headquarters of Coal India Limited (CIL) from Calcutta to Ranchi. As per information received from CIL, of the total number of 498 mines as on 1-4-1999 being operated by Coal India Ltd., 175 are in Jharkhand area (Bihar). In terms of coal production, the percentage of coal produced from the mines in Jharkhand area (Bihar) is about 27% of Coal India's total production during the year 1998-99.

Exploration of Mines and Minerals in NER

2844. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH : Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken up by Government to explore the mines and minerals in the States of the North-East Region;

(b) when was the survey conducted;

(c) what are the reports of such survey; and

(d) the amount so far spent for exploration of mines and minerals in the North-East Region on State-wise basis ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SMT.) RITA VERMA] : (a) to (c) The Department of Mines, Government of India had constituted a Task Force headed by the

† Original Notice of the question was received in Hindi.